

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN GRENADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 SECTO 06013

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJ: STATEMENT BY PANAMA ON CANAL NEGOTIATIONS JUNE 15, 1977

AT OASGA IN GRENADA

FOLLOWING IS USDEL'S QUICK TRANSLATION OF STATEMENT AS DELIVERED
BY PANAMA ON CANAL NEGOTIATIONS AT OASGA JUNE 15, 1977

BEGIN TEXT:

MR. CHAIRMAN: IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY, ON BEHALF OF
THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA TO PRESENT A REPORT ON THE STATUS
OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WE ARE CONDUCTING WITH THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA REGARDING THE SO-CALLED QUESTION
OF THE PANAMA CANAL.

I MUST BEGIN WITH AN EXPRESSION OF THE DEEPEST GRATITUDE
OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT FOR THE SOLIDARITY
OF LATIN AMERICA WHICH HAS BEEN ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL
WELLSPRINGS OF THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE IN THE TREATMENT
OF THE PROBLEM.

AT THE SAME TIME, I MUST EXPLAIN TO THE HEADS OF
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DELEGATIONS AND THROUGH YOU, TO PUBLIC OPINION OF THE
UNITED STATES AND TO THE WORLD THE REASONS LED
TO THE PANAMAINIAN DELEGATION TO PRESENT ITS OWN REPORT TO
THIS SESSION, CHANGING THE PROCEDURE FOLLOWED DURING THE
LAST TWO YEARS IN WHICH A JOINT REPORT WAS PRESENTED
BY THE US AND PANAMAIAN DELEGATIONS REGARDING THE STATUS
OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

IT SO HAPPENS, GENTLEMEN, THAT AFTER 13 YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAVE NOT BORNE FRUIT IN THE FORM OF DEFINITIVE AGREEMENTS, THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE ARE NO LONGER IN A POSITION TO BE ABLE TO ACCEPT ANY OTHER COMMUNIQUE, DECLARATION, OR JOINT DOCUMENT OTHER THAN THE MINIMUM TREATY COMPLYING WITH THE DECLARATION THAT THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA SIGNED BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE OAS IN PARIL OF 1964, EMBODYING THE COMMITMENT TO RESOLVE "PROMPTLY" THE QUESTIONS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

SINCE THAT TIME, THERE HAS BEEN A SERIES OF NEGOTIATIONS AND COMMON DECLARATIONS, DRAFT TREATIES, SUCH AS THOSE OF 1967 WHICH IN THE END TURNED OUT TO BE UNACCEPTABLE FOR BOTH GOVERNMENTS, AND THEN CAME TACK-KISSINGER AGREEMENT WHICH ESTABLISHED THE FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS. ANOTHER SERIES OF INTERAMERICAN DOCUMENTS, THOSE DELATING TO THE POLITICAL PROCESS KNOWN BY THE NAME OF "THE NEW DIALOGUE," BEARS WITNESS TO THE FACT OF AN APPARENT PROGRESS TOWARD REACHING FINAL SOLUTIONS.

FOR THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE, THE REALITS IS THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SIGNIFICANT DIPLOMATIC VICTORIES IN THE STRICTLY SEMANTIC FIELD, BUT WE CONTINUE TO ENDURE THE TREATY OF 1903.

IT WOULD SEEM HEALTHY THAT WHILE RECORDING HISTORY
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AND SHARING OUR PROBLEM WITH LATIN AMERICA, THAT WE RECOUNT BRIEFLY THE SITUATION THROUGH WHICH WE ARE LIVING AND FROM WHICH WE HAVE BEEN SUFFERING.

THE 1903 TREATY WAS NOT NEGOTIATED BY THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA. IT WAS IMPOSED ON IT UNDER EXTREMELY THREATENING CIRCUMSTANCES. LET ME SUMMARIZE VERY BRIEFLY THE CONDITIONS TO WHICH PANAMA HAD TO SUBMIT IN THE VERY ACT OF BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT STATE:

1. GRANTING IN PERPETUITY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THE USE, OCCUPATION AND CONTROL OF A STRIP 10 MILES WIDE FROM COAST TO COAST IN THE VERY CENTER OF OUR NATIONAL TERRITORY.

2. GRANTING IN PERPETUITY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THE EXERCISE OF JURISDICTION OVER THIS STRIP OF LAND FOR THE PURPOSES OF CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, PROTECTION AND SANITATION OF THE INTEROCEANIC CANAL.

3. LOSS OF TWO PORTS WHICH AFFORDED ENTRANCE TO PANAMA ON THE PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC SIDES AND WHICH WERE REDUCED TO THE ROLE OF TERMINALS OF THE CANAL.

4. DENIAL OF THE POSSIBILITY FOR THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ITS MAIN NATURAL RESOURCE--IT PRIVILEGED GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION--FOR ITS OWN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT.

5. THE UNAUTHORIZED ESTABLISHMENT IN THE MIDST OF A NATIONAL TERRITORY OF A FORMIDABLE STRUCTURE OF MILITARY MIGHT WHICH MAKES THE REPUBLIC INTO A STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE IN ANY INTERNATIONAL CONFLAGRATION.

FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY, I ABSTAIN FROM POINTING THE EXTREMELY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF A PHYSICAL, UNCLASSIFIED

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GEOGRAPHICAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL, SPIRITUAL, AND ECONOMIC NATURE WHICH DERIVED FROM THE EXISTENCE OF THE COLONIAL ENCLAVE ESTABLISHED ON THE SHORES OF THE CANAL WHICH HAVE LIMITED AND DEFORMED MY COUNTRY.

I MERELY WISH TO RECALL THAT THE ABOVE MENTIONED AGREEMENT HAD BARELY BEEN CONSUMATED, WHEN THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE WENT INTO UNCEASING BATTLE TO REVISE IT AND, STARTING WITH THE EVENTS OF JANUARY 1964, TO ELIMINATE IT AND ESTABLISH A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES REGARDING THE OPERATION OF THE CANAL ON THE BASIS OF NATIONAL DIGNITY.

THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION WHICH HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR ALMOST 13 YEARS ALREADY HAS NOW ENTERED A DECISIVE PHASE.

TO DO HONOR TO THE TRUTH, IT IS OUR OPINION THAT THE GREATEST PROGRESS AROUND THE NEGOTIATING TABLE HAS TAKEN PLACE UNDER PRESIDENT CARTER'S ADMINISTRATION. IF WE SUSTAIN AN ATTITUDE OF REAL AND RESPONSIBLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM AND A SINCERE DESIRE TO PUT AN END TO A COLONIALIST SITUATION INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE DAYS IN WHICH WE LIVE, THE POSSIBILITY WILL REMAIN OPEN FOR ACHIEVING A TREATY WHICH WILL HARMONIZE THE SUBSTANTIAL ASPIRATIONS OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS, WILL RETURN TO PANAMA ALL OF ITS TERRITORY, WILL DISMANTLE THE COLONIAL ENCLAVE AND WILL PRESERVE THE INTEROCEANIC WATERWAY FOR EXPEDITIOUS PASSAGE WITHOUT ANY KIND OF DISCRIMINATION. BUT UNTIL WE REACH THESE FINAL RESULTS, WE ALSO HAVE THE DUTY OF CONTROLLING OUR EMOTIONS SO THAT

THE GREAT EFFORT WHICH BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE TODAY
MAKING MAY LEAD TO OUR CALLING THE RIGHT TELEPHONE
NUMBER TO REACH INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE, NOT THE WRONG
NUMBER, BECAUSE PERHAPS THEN, ALTHOUGH WE WERE ABLE
TO DIAL MANY OF THE DIGITS TO GET THE RIGHT CALL, IT
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WOULD BE ENOUGH FOR US TO MAKE A MISTAKE IN DIALING
THE LAST ONE TO PREVENT THE CALL FROM GOING THROUGH.

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 SAB-02 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

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TO DATE, APPRECIABLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE WITH
PRELIMINARY UNDERSTANDINGS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS.
HOWEVER, IMPORTANT POINTS ARE STILL BEING ANALYZED BY THE
NEGOTIATING TEAMS.

THE DURATION OF THE NEW TREATY HAS BEEN AGREED
TO IN PRINCIPLE. IT WILL TERMINATE ON DECEMBER 31, 1999.

PANAMANIAN CIVIL AND CRIMINAL JURISDICTION WILL
BEGIN TO BE EXERCISED ALONG THE SHORES OF THE CANAL
THREE YEARS AFTER ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE TREATY.

THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA WILL GRANT TO THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA RIGHTS OF USE, DEFINED AND TEMPORARY,
OF THE AREAS STRICTLY NECESSARY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION

AND DEFENSE OF THE CANAL. PORTIONS OF LANDS AND WATERS OF CONSIDERABLE SIZE WILL BE RETURNED TO THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA UPON ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE TREATY. PROCEDURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN FOR THE PROGRESSIVE REVERSION OF THE LANDS WHICH BECOME UNNECESSARY FOR THE PURPOSES INDICATED ABOVE.

THERE WILL BE A GROWING PARTICIPATION OF PANAMA
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IN ALL FIELDS AND PLANS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CANAL FOR WHICH APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES WILL BE DRAWN UP WITH THE PROPER PROVISIONS SO THAT THE OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL SITUATION OF THE WORKERS WILL NOT BE AFFECTED NEGATIVELY; LIKEWISE MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN THEIR SITUATION.

AGREED PLANS REGARDING THE DEFENSE OF THE CANAL HAVE BEEN DEFINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION OF BOTH COUNTRIES, AND REGARDING THE ELIMINATION OF THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS ON NATIONAL TERRITORY UPON TERMINATION OF THE TREATY.

ON THE DELICATE MATTER OF GUARANTEES FOR FREE TRANSIT AND NEUTRALITY OF THE INTEROCEANIC WATERWAY, EFFORTS ARE GOING AHEAD TO SOLVE THE TECHNICAL AND POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES THAT THIS POINT INVOLVES.

REGARDING THE QUESTION OF ECONOMIC BENEFITS, DIRECT AND INDIRECT, TO WHICH PANAMA IS ENTITLED OWING TO ITS CONDITION AS TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGN, THE DISCUSSION HAS JUST OPENED ON THE PANAMA MAIN PROPOSALS. BUT WE ARE IN A STAGE OF A FIRST EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, NOT SO MUCH ON POSITIONS AS ON IMPRESSIONS AND CONCEPTS.

IT IS SENSIBLE ALWAYS TO BEAR IN MIND THAT THE PROBLEM IS ONE OF REMOVING THE TERRITORIAL ENCLAVE WHICH IN THREE-FOURTHS OF A CENTURY OF EXISTENCE HAS IMPOSED DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES WHICH HAVE BEEN UNEQUIVOCALLY HARMFUL TO HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH MAKES IT NECESSARY TO TAKE GREATER PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID HAVING SUCH PRACTICES CONTINUE IN MORE OR LESS SUBTLE OR CONCEALED FORMS. THE PURPOSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, I STRESS AGAIN, IS THE ELIMINATION OF THE COLONIAL SITUATION AND IT WOULD BE ABSURD TO REPLACE IT BY A
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NEW STATUS QUO FOR THE DURATION OF THE TREATY.

CONSEQUENTLY, THE TREATY, ALTHOUGH IT IS THE RESULT OF
A COMPROMISE BETWEEN ORIGINALLY OPPOSING POSITIONS, WILL
HAVE TO OPEN A SAFE PATH TOWARD THE FULL, REAL AND
EFFECTIVE RECOVERY OF AN EXTREMELY VALUABLE PART OF
OUR TERRITORY WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER THE CONTROL OF A
FOREIGN POWER FOR MORE THAN A CENTRY.

TO ACHIEVE THIS IS NOT SIMPLE NOR WILL IT BE THE
RESULT OF A MIRACLE. THE NEGOTIATION HAS NOT BEEN EASY
AND IT WILL NOT BE EASY UP TO THE LAST MOMENT. WHAT
I AM SURE ABOUT IS THAT THE CANAL WILL BE FREE AND
PANAMANIAN AND ALSO EFFICIENT AND OPEN TO ALL FLAGS OF
THE WORLD. THANK YOU. END TEXT.
VANCE

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